

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Hearing on “U.S. Energy Abundance: Exports and the Changing
Global Energy Landscape”
May 7, 2013

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today's hearing continues this subcommittee's look into what is becoming a welcome theme: how American energy abundance is rewriting the playbooks for all levels of energy policy. This new energy reality, resulting from advancements in innovation and technology, has game-changing potential for America's energy future with more jobs, lower prices, and less volatility - and as we will hear today - has far-reaching implications abroad as well.

As we learned at our February 5th hearing, U.S. energy resources are vastly abundant and growing, with technology continuing to evolve and new areas of the country becoming centers for exploration and production. It's not just Texas, Alaska, and Louisiana anymore - but places like Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, and even California - who are in the process of developing or considering developing new oil and gas resources from domestic shale. This diverse geographic abundance is helping to erase the volatility of the recent past where prices were becoming increasingly vulnerable to hurricanes and geopolitical turmoil to create a new North American gas market that is becoming the envy of the world. America's natural gas boom is creating competitive opportunities domestically for manufacturing and technology as well as international opportunities to help our allies reduce their reliance on geopolitically unstable regions of the world.

And I believe our abundance means we can have both: new jobs from a renaissance in the energy and manufacturing sectors, along with new diplomatic strength from using these resources to reinforce our ties to important allies and trading partners. Our changing energy landscape will produce both economic growth and geopolitical gains.

To think that America, in just a short period of time, would be at such a strategic advantage to use our resources to not only help our country domestically with new jobs and energy security, but to also influence Russia's ability to wield an energy weapon over its European customers is truly remarkable. Yet, as today's witnesses will tell us, that is exactly what is beginning to happen.

This hearing should also remind us that we must remain steadfast in our support for efforts to maximize use of our energy resources. As American shale production expands from natural gas to oil, we must embrace our newfound capability to shift the power structure with Venezuela, Russia, and the Middle East back to our favor and strive to avoid needless litigation or bureaucratic delays that threaten this realignment. We are in the midst of a budding success story about American prosperity, jobs, and national power. We are continuing to produce valuable energy resources, safely and responsibly around the country, but the benefits don't stop there as emissions also continue to decline.

I welcome our entire esteemed panel to this hearing, including Senators Johnston and Dorgan. Your extensive backgrounds and contributions to this discussion are incredibly valuable. Increased production and trade in American energy benefits both our economy at home and our standing around the world. The energy landscape is changing, and we will all be better for it. I look forward to our discussion on how to move forward.

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